

MESSANGER AND ADVOCATE, OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

VOL. 1.

PITTSBURGH, JULY 15, 1845.

No. 17.

SERMON No. 2.

DEDICATED TO THE SAINTS OF THE LAST DAYS.

BY S. RIGDON.

[Continued from page 248.]

Hebrews 2d chapter 6th verse: "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?"

The instance as quoted which took place at Ephesus, is another evidence of this same power in man, see the 6th verse of the 19th chapter of Acts, as above quoted. Paul "laid his hands on them," after they were baptised, "and they received the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues and prophecied." But if any are led yet to dispute the fact of this power in man, by which he can be saved, in the Savior's prayer recorded in the 16th chapter of John's gospel, the fact is again set forth in a manner most unanswerably. See John's gospel 17th chapter from the 20th to the close of the 24th verse, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through thy word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.— Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' By reading the former part of this prayer, and then the verses we have quoted, nothing can be made plainer than the fact, that the Savior received all men as possessing the same capacities of holding communion with God. He here prays that those who might believe on him through the word of the apostles, might be one with the apostles, and one with the Father and the Son, as the apostles were. How could this be done? there could be but one way, and that was, the way by which the apostles became one with the Father and the Son. Now if this prayer of the Savior is ever fulfilled, who can but see that the persons here said to believe on Christ through the apostles word, must have the power to do so. In the 21st verse it is said, speaking of those who believed through the apostles word; 'That they all may be one'—that is, the believers through the apostles

word and the apostles themselves, 'as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee.' How was Christ one with the Father? it was by the spirit of holiness which dwelt in both, and the same spirit of revelation which dwelt in the apostles, and by which they were made one with the father and the son; and how could those who believed through the apostles word become one with them all? No answer but one can be given, by the same spirit by which the Father and the Son became one, and by which the apostles became one with the Father and the Son, and what adds force to it is that it is said in the 22d verse "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they might be one even as we are one." Now who was it to whom this glory was given? the answer is to both the apostles and those who believed through their word.— In the above sayings of the Savior the capacities of man and his capabilities are set forth in a way not to be mistaken. Man is capable of being one with the Father and the Son, of being united in oneness with them; and happy for our investigation, we have had the whole subject in language which cannot be mistaken. For this cause the Savior gave his word to man, that man might be one with him and the Father; and he also gave them his glory, that they might be one with him and the Father. Man then must be capable of being so or else the Savior would not have deigned to give him the means of becoming so.

We have now before us the whole design of God in revealing himself to man, it was because of the capabilities of man to be made like himself, to be one with him, for this cause the Savior deigned to die for man. To this end the gospel was sent to man. To this end it was that God proposed to raise him from the dead. Man was capable of an exaltation that he knew nothing about, but God knew what man was, and therefore was "mindful of him" and knew who the son of man was therefore "visited him."

It matters not whether it is apostles or those who believed on their word, the object to be obtained was the same, that they all may be one with the Father and the Son. It is because of this that the same gospel was sent, that all through believing and obeying might obtain a union with the Deity, and be sharers in his wisdom, power, and glory. For this cause the promise of "the gift of the Holy Ghost" was given to all, that all might be one. Hence when the gospel was received, and hands laid on those who were baptised,

they spake with tongues and prophesied, because the Lord sent the gospel into the world that both they who administered and those who are administered to, might, by the same gospel and the same "gift of the Holy Ghost," become one with the Father and Son.

We think we need not pursue this part of our subject any farther; all may see, if they desire to see, the light in which the great God views the human family, and we can see why the gospel was sent to man, that man might be made partaker of "the Holy Ghost," both male and female, that, through that gift, they might be partakers of eternal life, and be one with the Father and the Son. If man then is not a partaker of "the Holy Ghost," and through that obtain divine communications, it is not for want of capacities for so doing; but because he denies himself the offered boon of heaven. For God who knows what man is, has said he is capable of being made like himself, and become one with him, by receiving the gospel which he has sent; for by that he can be made partaker of "the Holy Ghost," which will be in him "a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

— Hence the apostles went forth into the world to proclaim the gospel, that men through obedience thereto might receive "the Holy Ghost," and through receiving "the Holy Ghost" might be made one with the Father and the Son, and being made one with the Father and the Son, might, like them, have eternal life. The Lord knowing man's capabilities sent the gospel, that we might be made partakers with him in the benefits of the Holy Ghost, and through that "gift of the Holy Ghost" might be taught of God; obtain light upon light, revelation upon revelation, until all our powers and faculties were evolved, and we be like the Father and the Son, and he made meet to be partakers with them in their glory. He then that denies the spirit of revelation, denies salvation; for salvation comes by reason of being like the Father and the Son, and this alone is obtained by the spirit of revelation in our hearts.

— Having ascertained the object for which the Lord addressed himself to man, or revealed himself to any portion of the human family; which was because that man was capable of being united with himself, [God] and such was man that, by divine influence, he was capable of understanding and comprehending as God understood and comprehended; and that man might be put into the possession of all his nature was capable of, caused the Lord to reveal himself to him, and adapt his scheme to the capacities of man, so that its effects were felt by both men and women, in a way tending to the grand object to be accomplished. The effects on all both men and women were felt, as soon as any obeyed the proclamation sent. The persons rendering obedience found themselves in possession of new power, a power of looking into futurity; of removing

diseases; of having power over devils, and things that were not God like in their nature; and all this because the object was to make man like God, so that he might be one with him.

We will further pursue the history of man, which only tends to confirm what we have said above.

As we have before said the bible takes man at the time of the union of body and spirit, and leaves him at the time of the resurrection, except a few isolated expressions which can do little more than awaken in us a desire for more revelation; but we have learned some important things about man, in the account we have, to which we will give attention. In the present state of existence, all know that man is capable of suffering, that there is nothing in the state of existence itself, to prevent a man from suffering. In the next state, which is a state of separation, we have also learned that man is capable of suffering, that is, the spirit can suffer after it is separated from the body, and gone into another state of existence. The rich man, in the unseen world or in the world of spirits, opened his eyes in torment. This establishes the fact, that a disembodied spirit can suffer, that there is nothing in the disembodied state, itself, calculated to give peace; and when we reach the last state of which we have any knowledge by our written revelations; that is the state after the resurrection, there, we are told that some are raised "to shame and everlasting contempt," so that in that state also man is capable of suffering, and there is nothing in either state itself which saves a man from suffering, whether in the flesh, in a disembodied state or in the resurrection. In all these various states man is capable of suffering. For the rich man in his disembodied state was tormented, and some will be raised to shame and contempt. On the other hand it is said, that Lazarus in the disembodied state was comforted, and it is also said, that in the state after the resurrection some will be raised to everlasting life. What makes the difference? why is one in the disembodied state, comforted and another tormented? as to the organization, both are alike; both are disembodied spirits, and why not both alike? Why not both tormented or both comforted? The same may be said about men after the resurrection. Why is one raised to shame and contempt, and another to everlasting life? Both are raised from the dead, and receive their bodies, and yet one has shame and the other life everlasting. Why this difference? The fact then of raising a man from the dead does not secure him life everlasting.

No fact can be taught more plainly than the one that there is no change to which man is subjected, that is, from life to death and from death to the resurrection, that in itself has power to give man rest. Man can suffer in his disembodied state after death, as well as while in the flesh; and he can suffer after the resurrection, as well as before; and the man

that feigns to himself that all are happy in their disembodied state after death, or in their reunited state after the resurrection, does just as those do who make for themselves and others an eternal heaven and an eternal hell; supply the place of revelation with conjecture, and that a bold one too, one in direct opposition to all that is written. All that any man knows or can know about these dates of man's existence, is by what is written in the revelations; all else is conjecture. When a Diest or Atheist gives to himself an existence, in an organized form, after this state of existence is dissolved, he does it by conjecture; and when he makes that state of existence to be either a state of happiness or misery, he does so by conjecture, and conjecture only; for he has no other means by which he can do it; and when he says he has no organized existence after this state of existence, he says so by conjecture, and conjecture only; for he can have no knowledge about it only by revelation; and when he effects to laugh at the christians, so called, about their ideas of futurity, he laughs at himself, for his theory rests wholly upon conjecture, and theirs cannot be worse; he laughs at them for what he calls conjecture, and yet builds his whole hopes and fears, if he has any, on the uncertainty of conjecture.

All then that any person or persons can know about a future state, he knows only by revelation. And now, with the revelations in our hands, we renew the inquiry; what makes man to differ in the future state of his existence? differ he does, as sure as there is revelation, and what says the bible about this difference?

In the conversation, recorded by Luke, which took place between the rich man and Lazarus, it was something which was done in this world which did it, as the rich man desired Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brethren to warn them, lest they went to that place of torment. And according to what all the writers say, it was something which men do in this world which makes the difference at the time of the resurrection. Hence it is said that he that believes not the gospel, shall be damned. All the admonitions contained in the scriptures are to this effect; they were delivered in view of the effect to be produced on man, after he left this world and this state of existence. When Christ comes, the second time, according to Paul, he will take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel. See 2d Thessalonians 1: 7-10, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe

(because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." But we need not multiply quotations on this subject, as the scriptures every where abound with them. There is no subject on which the sacred writers have said so much as on this one, that whatever tends to promote the interest, happiness, and peace of man in the other state of existence, is something done here in the flesh. The Deity knowing "what man is," and understanding upon what principle it is that man can be benefited in his other states of existence, did, "before the foundation of the world," devise a scheme, and before ordained, and pre-determined, that by virtue of that scheme of things, he would raise all who received it to be partakers with himself in his glory, and make them one with him, and through the influence that scheme of things would exercise over both the bodies and minds of men, introduce them, in their future state of existence, into a relation with the Deity, which would secure unto them comfort in their disembodied state, and eternal life in the state after the resurrection.

This is the cause why the gospel is sent unto man, because if man died without it their spirits could not be comforted after death, nor could they be raised to everlasting life, and all the world would be in a state of misery, whether disembodied or raised from the dead.

Thus far can we trace the history of man in the revelations, and we must leave our readers to be their own judges whether they need any more revelations or not. One thing more and then we shall leave the subject for the present. From what Peter says we have a hint given in relation to the final place of residence of the righteous. He says "we look for a new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," and from what he says about them, we may infer, that the righteous will dwell there; but we have no account of a hell after the first hell is cast into the lake of fire.

Here the written revelations leave us, and if we are to have no more revelation, we must be fruitful in conjecture, or else remain unsatisfied in this state of existence, let it be as it may in the others.

For the Messenger and Advocate.

ESSAY ON TRUE AND FALSE PROPHETS.

Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name.—Mark 13: 5, 6.

Why has the Lord in the various ages of the world called men, commissioned them, and sent them to prophecy to their fellow men; even at the peril of their lives?

We answer, it was because the people to whom they were sent, loved darkness rather than light—because their deeds were evil; because they had hearkened to false prophets, or false teachers, or both, who aided by the Enemy had introduced among them false princi-

ples and practices calculated to bring upon them punishment instead of blessings: by causing them to violate the laws of God.—True prophets were always sent to warn the people of their danger, to call them back again from their wanderings. But if they took not the warning and repented, then they were to denounce the calamities and judgements which would fall upon them in consequence of disobedience. The object of false prophets always was and always will be to deceive.—The object of true prophets to the converse, always was and always will be to undeceive, and lead men to the knowledge of the true God.

All attentive readers of holy writ must know that the age in which the Messiah will make his appearance, is one particularly marked out by himself, and by his apostles as one in which will appear many false Christs, false prophets, and false teachers—'heaps of them,' whose only object will be to deceive. And the apostle's declaration was that "many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." In as much as "many false prophets" are to make their appearance in the last age and are "to deceive many," in consequence of their devices: we would ask an important question. How may those prophets sent of God be known from those sent by the Enemy? A man cannot be a prophet unless he is inspired. A true prophet always was and always will be inspired of God. A false one must get his inspiration from the Devil—it must come from beneath. Inspiration then is not that gift or principle by which we are to judge whether the man who presents himself as a prophet, is true or false. Many people of this age, and among them those who are called learned, suppose that if the Lord calls a man and sends him to prophesy to any people, he is bound to endue that man with power to work miracles as did Moses, Joshua, and Peter; or those to whom he is sent are not bound to receive him. Nay, but they go farther, they hold that they are bound to reject both him and his message. The above notion is either true or false. If false, and we can succeed in showing it, then we shall have obtained one important point that the learned of the age, who oppose our views of religion could not reach. If power to work miracles is the test of a true prophet, then we are bound to receive all who come as prophets, who possess miraculous power. But the Savior and his inspired apostles have given us some lessons—important lessons on this subject, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders," to seduce and to deceive if it were possible even the elect.

Paul speaking of the times of the second advent says "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unri-

ghteousness in them that perish." When the apostle John was describing the scenes which would take place before the coming of the Messiah, he says "For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." Again we find the following conclusive remarks in the 19th chapter of his visions. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, * * these were both cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone." From the above quotations we may learn, if we are susceptible of tuition at all, that the power of working miracles will not in the last days, be confined to the prophets of God. And indeed if we search closely we will find that the Magicians of Egypt withstood Moses and Aaron; and that through them miraculous power was manifested in the presence of Pharaoh and his court. In the days of the Savior's ministry he found a man that could not be confined with chains—he would pluck them off by some strange power. And also the apostles met with a Simon Magus who had bewitched the people of Samaria so that they called him, "the great power of God."

After examining the above can any intelligent man ever suppose that we are to know a true prophet from a false one by miraculous power being manifested, even to so great a degree as "to call fire down from heaven on earth in the sight of men." Rev. 13: 13.

We have met with some in our day who supposed that if they could reach the point where they could rend the veil and obtain visions, then they would arrive at a positive certainty. Then there could be no mistake.—Now if so, above all things persons who wish to live above doubts should seek to obtain visions. If no power can give visions but that of God, then to obtain a vision would settle all cavil in the mind of the person thus favored forever. But how is the fact in the case?—The word of God informs us that when Jesus was on earth, he went up upon an exceeding high mountain, and there the devil appeared to him and conversed with him. During their interview the enemy had power to draw away the veil and show the Savior "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them."—This was an extensive view—a vision in earnest. It is also said that the devil has power "to transform himself nigh into an angel of light." Now if the Devil once had the power and excised it too, with so extraordinary a personage and on a very important occasion, shall we not conclude that in the last days when he comes with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, that he will show visions to crown his deceptions?

We think that we have clearly shown that the people who live in the age in which the Savior will make his appearance in glory,

above all others should be careful not to be deceived.

It has not been our object however in the preceding remarks, to do away with the idea that the true servants of God in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, who will prepare it for his advent, will not be inspired and have visions and miraculous power given them from heaven; in order to bring about the purposes of God: and that too as marvelously as in the days of Moses, and even more so, to assist them to overcome and ruin the power of the devil. No.—But our object has been to show that false notions exist relative to the power and privilege of true prophets of God, and to put all the lovers of truth on their guard, so that they may understand and obey the command of the Savior, "Take heed lest any man deceive you."

Now if we believe the inspired writings that are generally believed and received as canonical, we are bound to believe that God will work by miraculous power through his servants in the age—the very age in which the Messiah will come. The prophecies of Isaiah are very plain upon the subject. "And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river and smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be an high way for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." Neither the Red sea which lies east of Egypt, nor the river Nile which empties itself into the Mediterranean by seven principal mouths has ever as yet been particularly disturbed in their beds, or any high way been cast up there. But to fulfil the prophecy, it will require at some future period, an omnipotent arm stretched out over them in miraculous, yes marvelous power. A mighty agitation in nature in order to throw up that "high way," for the redeemed to walk on. In his 25 chapter he speaks of the power that will be displayed at that important period. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." No person who believes in the restoration of scattered Israel to the lands of their inheritance again, will doubt or can doubt but that God will bring them back by power.—Will return them again as he led them from Egypt by giving to his servants, whom he will raise up, power supernatural power, even surpassing Moses and Aaron.

Jeremiah says on this subject, "Therefore, behold the days come saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought them up from the land of the north, and from the lands whether he had driven them; and

I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." Why will it no more be said that the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from Egypt? Every Jew in all past ages as well as the present, looks back with feelings of pride, and points the world to the mighty displays of God's power in their behalf, as their fathers were passing from Egypt to Canaan. But says the prophet, there will come a time in the history of that distinguished nation that those miracles wrought by Moses and Joshua, will not come into remembrance—not even mentioned, in consequence of the superlative excellence and grandeur of those displays which God will make in their behalf, when the time comes for their restoration from all countries whither they have been "a hiss and a by-word." Power, yes, marvellously miraculous power must be shown forth, or they never will cease to mention those miracles exerted in behalf of their fathers in their journey to Canaan.

The Lord seems to have had two objects in view in giving man power to work miracles. First, to arrest the attention of unbelievers, and cause them to investigate the truth. Secondly, the immediate benefit of the person or persons on whom, or for whom the power was exerted. Miracles never converted any person to the knowledge of the true God, nor never will. They were performed in Egypt, yet Pharaoh and his court were hardened—they perished in the Red sea. Hundreds and thousands of Jews perished in the land of their fathers, by the hands of the Romans, although they had seen and known the stupendous counteractions of the laws of nature by Jesus, and his apostles. Signs did not convert Pharaoh nor Herod, but they were hardened and fell. Faith and obedience to the truth alone convert the sinner from the error of his way. And after he becomes a believer of the gospel and follower of the Lamb, then the words of the Savior are that "signs shall follow them that believe." This accords with Paul's view of belief or faith. He says "Faith comes by hearing." Now if faith comes by hearing the word of God, it does not come by seeing miracles. But miracles and signs serve to confirm the true believer. Mark 16: 20, "The Lord working with them, (the believers) and conferring the word with signs following, amen." Paul writes in the same strain Heb. 2: 4, "God also bearing them witness (the believers) both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." If the notion of the learned is true that power to work miracles is the test of a prophet sent of God, then the Lord would hold himself bound to give every one that he sent power to perform them. And no people would be under condemnation for rejecting a prophet until after he had performed miracles to prove his mission. Upon this principle we would be com-

pelled to reject the testimony of the greatest prophet that was ever born of a woman, viz: John the Baptist. He performed no miracles, John 10: 41. But another view of the subject, if miracles were performed to beget faith in the beholders, then Jesus who had power to work them should have preformed them where he found the greatest amount of unbelief reigning, but he did not do so—nor he could not do so. What, *could* not? Mark 6: 5, "And he could there do no mighty work." But again if his miracles were intended to beget faith in the wicked, why did he so often say to those on whom the work had been performed, and even charge them strictly saying "See thou tell no man." Matt. 8: 4, Mark 5: 43. And when king Herod so much desired to see a miracle and "hoped to have seen one done by him and questioned with him in many words, but he (Jesus) answered him nothing." Luke 23: 8, 9. If miracles would produce faith, why did he not exert his power and convert the King?

The influence of a miracle upon the heart of a wicked man is fully shown in Acts 4: 16, 17, "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But, that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name." After the above research we come more and more to the conclusion with Paul, that faith comes by *hearing* the word of God, and not by *seeing* miracles.

That the Lord will raise up true prophets to warn the inhabitants of the earth, before "that great and dreadful day of the Lord" comes, in which "all the proud and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up," is a plain matter of fact sustained both by reason and revelation. Before the antediluvians were destroyed by the flood, Noah a prophet of God, mighty in word and in deed, warned them for one hundred and twenty years. And although he was not very successful in converting them, yet he preached to them in righteousness—until the Lord shut him up in the ark. Before Sodom and the cities of the plain, had brimstone and fire rained upon them from the Lord out of heaven, to their entire destruction, Lot that godly man lived among them: and when the angels of God visited him and told him their errand, he ran to warn his friends to flee with him, in order to escape destruction. He was not very successful in convincing them, or being the means of saving even his own household. As it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, so shall it be in the day of the second coming of Messiah. The wicked paid no heed to the warning in either case, "but were marrying and giving in marriage" until their destruction overtook them. We would ask, will it be so at the advent? Jesus said Mat. 24: 37, "But as the days of Noah were, so

shall the coming of the Son of man be."—What, will a true prophet like Noah warn that people who will live when Messiah comes? Certainly so. If not it cannot be similar to the days of Noah.

Reader turn to the eleventh chapter of Revelations and read it through, and we think that if you are candid, you will come to the same conclusion that we have, that is, that after the outcasts of Israel have been gathered back to old Jerusalem, then false prophets will go out among the heathen working miracles before them, and by that means will stir them up, and a great army of Gog and Magog will come up "to take spoil." Then and there God will raise up two witnesses of truth, who will also work miracles and who will prophesy to the great torment of all the wicked who hear them. When they finish their work and testimony, as an evidence that they were true prophets of God, and had well done, "they hear a great voice from heaven saying unto them, come up hither." The truth of the matter is, that the Holy Spirit of the Lord about which all the religious world are talking, writing, and praying, is in reality the "spirit of prophecy." So the angel of the Lord understood it when he visited John in the isle of Patmos, "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19: 10.

We can see by looking over all the above ground that Satan can inspire his subjects, show visions, and give them power to work miracles. He can do more, he can show visions to the servants of the Lord. Then the conclusion is inevitable that the performance of a miracle by a man, is not evidence conclusive, that he is a man of God sent with a message to the world.

The rule by which to distinguish a true prophet from a false one, certainly never has been understood or acted upon by the people to whom the Lord sent his servants. For we are assured by the Savior himself that if the people to whom the true prophets were sent had not stoned and killed them "the Lord would have gathered the people together," he would have protected, fed, and prospered them.—Now we believe that those persecutors of the prophets of God, with Saul of Tarsus, verily thought that "they were doing God's service." They thought that the false prophets were true ones, and that the true ones were of the devil. So it will be in the last days, the false prophets will go out and "deceive the nations," and gather them together to battle. But the true ones like Noah, Lot, John, and Paul will be listened to but by few. It will be as Isaiah saw it. "The inhabitants of the earth will be burned, and but few men left." Isa. 24: 6.

But we inquire why will it be so? Why will people not take warning by the past, and be prepared for that day of days? The answer now is, and will be at the end, as it was in the days of the Savior, "men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

The great and uniform object of all the revelations that God has ever given or manifested to man, from the days of Adam to the present time, has been to develop his own character, and show to man that he might form relations with the heavens, so firm, and so fixed, that all the combinations of earth and hell could not deceive him. After man has formed those relations with his heavenly Father, has been adopted into his kingdom, and has received the spirit of adoption—the spirit of the kingdom—the earnest of his inheritance; then if he lives to his privilege false Apostles may testify, false Prophets may prophesy; and if the people desire it, they may “heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, they may turn away their ears from the truth and be turned unto fables.” Yet the man with the seal of his adoption in his heart, with an “unction from the Holy One, may know all things.” He may know whether God has sent the apostle, prophet, or teacher, or whether he is a deceiver. John said to the saints in his day “ye know all things.” 1st John 2; 20. It was upon this principle of knowledge that Paul said to his brethren of Thessalonica, “but ye brethren are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are the children of light.” James, the apostle, laid down in the kingdom of Christ one general, grand principle of action. And if that principle was only lived to, no man need ever be deceived by false apostles, prophets or teachers. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him.” James 1: 5. This is the great key or principle, which throws wide open the door of intelligence to man.

Suppose the true signs of the coming of the Son of man should appear, the sun should be darkened, the moon turned to blood, and the stars begin to fall from heaven. How, we would ask, may it be known that those signs are then given to announce the advent? We answer, if the saint's mind is in doubt, if he lacks wisdom, if he knows not the object for which the signs are shown, he looks up to God and says, Father give me knowledge of those things; give me wisdom that I may know what to do. His God gives him liberally. He stands then without fear, in the midst of the wreck of nations, and the contention of elements—trusting in his heavenly Father.

But how may a true prophet be known from a false one? We are well aware that to answer this query correctly, requires deep research, reflection, and combination of principles, times, characters, and circumstances.—No man with the bible history before him can help but see the difficulties under which all the true prophets of God were placed. When they had a message to deliver to the world, they generally, may we not say, universally, had to go—at their peril, and combat the prejudices of the age in which they lived—the systems of

corruption which had been introduced by false prophets, or false teachers, or both; who had prophesied or taught lies in the name of the Lord, and in consequence thereof the practices of the people had become so corrupt, that they called aloud for vengeance from heaven; but that God who is “abundant in goodness truth and mercy,” “at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,” in order to correct their abuses and lead them back unto himself, lest his judgements should fall upon them for their destruction.

The people to whom the Lord sent his prophets, had generally become so wedded to their transgressions and the false teachers had obtained such an influence over them, that they usually rose up and “killed the prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them.”—Now if the test that the people of this age have set up, by which to determine true from false prophets, that is, *power to work miracles*, is a correct one, how easy would it have been at any time for the Lord, “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance,” to have given to every prophet that power by which he could have convinced his hearers, and thus have saved his prophets from horrid persecutions, privations, and generally an untimely—and not unfrequently a horrid death?

True prophets were always sent to cry repentance, to reform those to whom they were sent, to lay down principles that would better their condition, that if observed, would elevate their characters before God. False prophets cry peace, peace, all is well. “No evil shall come upon you.” Jer. 23: 17. The prophecies of true prophets always did and always will come to pass, because God spake through them, “For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2d Peter 1: 21. False prophets are not seers, they cannot look into the future, their prophecies therefore are all uncertainty. Their inspiration is from the devil, or they speak from the imagination of their own hearts. If a prophet appears before any people and makes a declaration or delivers a message, and that declaration or message is derogatory to the true character of God, or is contrary to any fixed principle as laid down in the divine volume, then that man is not sent of God; but his inspiration is from beneath. Because a man sent of God will speak his word, and the Lord would not speak against his own character or against any word that he had ever given to any former prophet. The Lord said Isaiah 8: 20, “To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because their is no light in them.” A message delivered by any prophet which has not for its ultimate

object, love to God and peace and good will to man, is not of God. The Lord in all his revelations, through his prophets to man, lays in them deep the foundations of peace—the highest and best interest of man.

Finally, after all we have said we know of but one infallible rule by which to judge of Apostles, Prophets, or Revelators, purporting to be sent of God. The man who sets himself up for judge in these matters ought, before he passes decision, first to be sure that he himself is in possession of the Holy Spirit, "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1st Cor. 2: 10. And further, Paul says verse 15, "He that is spiritual judgeth ALL things." This is a sweeping declaration, and the converse of it would be that he who is not spiritual cannot judge of spiritual matters. But again Paul says, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God—because they are spiritually discerned."

The great reason why the true prophets of God, who were sent in the various ages of the world, and even his own Son, were rejected of man was that the people to whom they were sent, were not possessed of the Spirit of God. They well knew that the prophets had a different spirit from themselves, and willingly justifying the one which possessed them, they of course condemned and frequently executed God's chosen. The wicked always did and always will condemn and reject the prophets of God, and call them deceivers. Those only who receive the truth, and love it in their hearts, will ever be benefited by directions from on high. They will hear the voice of "that prophet." It will not be strange to them—They will cry as did Abraham, "here am I Lord." And when they learn the message they will with delight put into practice every holy principle revealed. They will not be afraid of "any man deceiving them by any means."

Brethren of the kingdom of Christ, shall we live continually so spiritual that we can "judge all things," and yet, we ourselves be judged or condemned by no man? May God grant it in all our behalves.

W. E. McLELLIN.

MESSANGER AND ADVOCATE.

PITTSBURGH, PA. JULY 15, 1845.

We wish to say a word about writing letters. It is required of all the traveling Elders to write to us occasionally, and let us know how they are doing, what they are doing, and especially how the cause of truth prospers on account of their labours in their ministry.—We should be happy to receive such letters frequently. We wish also that Elders who are presiding over branches would communi-

cate occasionally their progress in the divine life, and their prospects of the future. One word more and we have done, brethren, when you write you will please to pay your postage. The postage on letters is reduced, but still it requires money to pay it—especially where many letters are received.

Our news from the Elders abroad continues to be of the most cheering kind. Where they have gone out trusting in God, and have proclaimed the gospel of truth in demonstration of the Spirit, they have found attentive hearers. And where they have continued their labors success has crowned their ministry, and they have been enabled to rejoice in the privilege of introducing members among us, who are full of faith, and who so far manifest forth good works meet for the kingdom. In this city we move steadily onward, increasing in numbers slowly. The saints are growing not only in the knowledge of the truth, but are also increasing in good works, and in love one toward another in the Lord. They stand "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

We learn from Elder J. A. Forgeus Larharpe Ill. July 4 '45 and also from others of our brethren of the awfully dreadful state of society in that region of murders—two of which were lately committed in Hancock Co. within 24 hours. Arms and ammunition seem to be in good demand there, and there are many forebodings and conjectures among all classes as to what a few months, and probably from the present signs, even what a few weeks will bring forth. Awful indeed must that state of society be when life and the peaceable possession of property are not vouchsafed to the citizens by the strong arm of the Law. But such seems to be the state of society in and about Hancock Co. Ill. We are truly sorry that causes should have existed to lead to such a state of things. But so it is. Since the commencement of this paper, we have said a number of times that troubles—serious troubles would befall the people of Nauvoo. We knew that certain causes would produce cer-

tain effects—and we know so still: however we may deplore the results.

The letter from brother N. B. Helverson, found in another column, will be read with deep interest, as it sets forth in plainness the principles by which P. P. Pratt and his adherents are governed.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS.

We have received letters from our brethren from different points, which we cannot publish at length, but we make the following extracts:

Elder G. M. Hinkle writes from Buffalo I. T. June '45—Dear Brethren, in the kingdom and common cause of our Master, I am glad to inform you that the Lord has already fulfilled his promises to me in a great degree as made when I was set apart to this mission; for he has given us near one hundred of my old brethren and we have had the pleasure of leading them down into the waters of baptism, and through the ordinances of introducing them into the kingdom of God. The prospects are more and more flattering every day in this region of country."

Elders H. Kellogg and L. Rich write from Kirtland O. June 28 '45. "When we returned from conference we commenced teaching and exhorting the brethren and sisters to holy living, and our meetings have been very interesting. We have baptized thirteen, and we think there are more here who will soon follow their example. We have confidence that the good brethren of the grand council will have wisdom to do all things according to the pattern, and to bear off the Kingdom triumphant"

Also from S. Wardell Longbranch N. J. July 8. 1845. "Our worthy bro. J. G. Divine has just arrived at our place in good health. I wish you to continue to send me the Messenger and Advocate. I like it much, very much indeed. I send one dollar enclosed to pay for it for one year."

We make the following extract from a letter received from brother Joseph Reeve of Woodstown, N. J. dated July 1, 1845. It is a source of great satisfaction to us, to receive the many testimonials from our brethren abroad in various parts of the country, manifesting their firmness and integrity in the cause of truth.

"Sir, please send me all the numbers of the Messenger from the commencement.—We have not had any papers nor has any Elder been here since Brother Rigdon was here last fall. The twelveites have been to visit us, but we stand firm to our post. Brother Robison is well and in good spirits.

COMMUNICATIONS.

THE MORMONS.

We have a few words to say in relation to Nauvoo and the attitude we sustain to that people. There is an attempt made and making by that people, to make all believe, over whom they have any influence, that we are some how or other engaged in trying to bring mobs on them or to inflame the public mind against them; this we do not believe we have power to do if we had any desire to do so; we say let the Lord judge whether we have or not.

All that we have ever said, or intend to say, or ever did intend to say about that people, was to make all acquainted with the true state of the case, as it existed between them and us. We did see a disposition on the part of that people, to mislead the public mind on the subject, and make a wrong impression on them. The object we had in view has been obtained, and since all the facts have been elicited, necessary to the accomplishment of that object, we are not disposed to keep up a war with them or any other people.

As to their peculiar religious tenets which was the cause of the real difference between them and us, and out of which the evils grew which are effecting them, and likely to do it, belongs to themselves, and as far as we are concerned, they may enjoy them, since the public know or may know, both through their own writings and ours, what the real difference is; these called forth all we have said in relation to them, it being our firm conviction that they were not according to Godliness.

The proofs they gave to the world that we were seeking their lives, have so plainly shewn that they were mistaken, if they thought so, that a word is all that is necessary. They sent forth the alarm that we were colliging with certain men who they said were the active agents in the death of the Smiths. Namely the messrs Laws, Fosters, Higbees, & Bennett, facts have proven that between them and us, there was no concert of action. We had a conversation, last winter in Ohio, with Mr. William Law whom we unexpectedly met on his way to visit his brothers, in Mercer co. in this state. The conversation was a friendly one, but terminated in convincing both parties that our religious views were so widely different that no union could exist, and so we parted, agreeing to disagree, and so the matter ended. As to the others mentioned, we never had any conversation with them, and facts have settled the question in dispute, if there ever were one, that none of them had any disposition to unite with us in a church relation, but we consider they have a right to do so, if they comply with what we consider the only way of admission, which is baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit, as all others attain their standing with us.

Mr. P. P. Pratt seemed so certain of there being some connection between us and the above named persons, that he gave forth a prophecy in the New York Prophet, that such would be the case, and when a certain paper made its appearance, said to have been written by Joseph Smith during his life time, and sealed, and deposited in the hands of Dr. J. C. Bennett never to be opened until after Mr. Smith's death, Mr. P. P. Pratt reminded the people that he had prophesied, that the church of Christ would be composed in part of the persons, to whom he and others took such decided exception, and gave the appearance of this paper as proof of the fact. Now as to the paper we know just as much about it as Mr. Pratt, Dr. Bennett says it was by Joseph Smith deposited in his [Bennett's] hands to be disposed of as he did. This is what we know about it, Dr. Bennett sent the paper to another person's address, who has it now.— This is all we know about it, and Dr. Bennett has gone his own way, and attending to his own business, as far as we know; and we presume has as little idea of ever joining with the church of Christ, as he has with the Mormon church. So much for the paper.

We are well assured from facts, which are stubborn, that the enemies of the people of Nauvoo, in their own vicinity, are as deeply opposed to us as they are to them, and if we were located in Nauvoo, as the inhabitants of Nauvoo are, we could expect nothing but opposition from them. We have reasons for this. In all the notices taken of us in the papers, in that country, opposed to the people of Nauvoo there appears to be an ill feeling toward us about which we cannot be mistaken. We are never spoken of in a respectfull but disrespectful manner, and the very forms of expression shew a feeling of deep prejudice against us. Not from any personal hostility, we judge, for we do not know how there could be any, for we never had any personal difficulties with any of them; but the people there seem to believe, absolutely, that our religion is an imposition practised and practising on the people, and they cannot have any forbearance with it or us. This is a something we have, and will have to bear through our lifetime, as far as we can see.

The charge then, attempted to be made by the people of Nauvoo, is forever repelled by facts, so that all may see if they wish to see, and when facts are left to tell the true state of the case, it is that the church of Christ and the Mormons, are so widely different in their respective belief, that they are of necessity opposed to each other, as far as their religion is concerned, and the attempt to introduce extraneous matter in the controversy, is without foundation in truth. The attempt was made by that people, for months before our paper was published, to make a false impression on the public mind, through the medium of their paper, by false statements, which were the

cause of our publishing a paper when we did, and had they not done that, it is probable that we should not have published a paper till this time; but we were compelled to do so, as a measure of self defence, and we have been we may say, almost compelled from, and ever since by the force of circumstances, over which we have had no control, and things, pertaining to us, have been conducted, and are now conducting by an unseen hand, and things take place which are astonishing to ourselves, and as unexpected to us, as they could be to others.

Between us and the Mormons there is a greater difference of religious belief, than almost any are apprised of. There is scarcely one point of similarity. It might appear, at first sight, that we agreed in the original proclamation of the gospel, of baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, but when the matter is closely examined it will be found that the difference here is very great. They seem to think, or we judge so from their action, that the proclamation is general without any regard to the order of the church whatever, to this we take exception, while we believe a baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we believe that the promise of either, remission of sins or the gift of the Holy Spirit, is not obtained only as the persons administering, are doing so by virtue of their standing in their place in the church of Christ. That if the ecclesiastical order of the church is broken, the promised gifts cease, and neither baptism nor the laying on of hands can bestow them, only as the true order of the church, where Christ appointed these blessings to be obtained, is retained, that as soon as this ecclesiastical arrangement of the church is broken, the blessings cease, and every foul spirit and evil work will follow.

The pretensions of the people of Nauvoo, founded on the primitive church, that at the death of the Savior the twelve apostles took the authority, is so singular a mistake, that it needs but very little reflection to see it. The Savior never formed a church while he was here in the flesh; if he had, it would have ceased to exist. The apostles could not have taken the authority in a church that the Savior organized himself; for the same authority under which the church of Christ is organized, is necessary to the existence of the church; take the authority away by which it was organized, and the order of things established would cease to exist. Hence it was that the Savior organized no church while here, because, when he went away, there was no such authority to take his place, and instead of his organizing a church, he went away and then empowered the apostles to organize the church, and that order could be preserved; but no sooner did apostles cease in that church, than it ceased to exist; and all the spiritual gifts ceased also, and if we ask why

the spiritual gifts ceased? the answer and the only answer which can be given is that the ecclesiastical order through which the gifts were bestowed was broken.

We, in opposition to the people at Nauvoo, believe that in order to have the blessings continue in the church, it is necessary that the whole body should be fully framed together, each joint supplying its place, and then the spiritual nourishment will flow to each part; but disorganize the body, and the nourishment will not reach every part, and take off the head and it will reach none of the members; but the people of Nauvoo claim the right of disorganizing the body, and yet proclaim the blessings, which were only promised to the body perfectly organized. In this there is between us and them an essential difference in the elementary principles of the gospel.

Another essential difference between them and us is the principle of exaltation. This they say is to be done through a system of sealing up women to them in this world, to be their wives in eternity as well as time.—This is what they call the blessings of Jacob, and that their exaltation is in consequence of it. To this we do, and ever did, take decided exception: we believe that the exaltation of man depends upon the evolution of faculty, by means of the gift of the Holy Spirit, enlightening the mind, until it can be a companion for the Deity, and become one with him.—There is scarcely one essential principle pertaining to salvation, about which the Mormons and the church of Christ agree.

These are the real differences between the Mormons and us, in our religious beliefs. All that is said about the church of Christ, being partakers with their enemies their enemies themselves can be witnesses; we have no idea that their enemies would make common cause with us against them, or in any thing else, if we can judge from their papers; indeed so manifest are these things, that Mr. Hyde wrote a letter to this city declaring that the people at St. Louis were as much opposed to us as they were to them, and though they were friendly to our face yet, when our back was turned, they would speak in most disrespectful terms of us, a something of which we have no doubt; but why is it that Mr. Hyde has so shortly found out that we are making common cause together? the truth is, he knows better and always did. The letter he wrote here was doubtless true and is now the truth, and the people of Nauvoo know it as well as we; but this cry about uniting with their enemies, was raised for effect. But time and facts have put the matter forever at rest, and all see there is no connection between us and the Laws, Fosters, Higbees, and Bennet, persons about whom we have nothing to say, only that they have a right to any religion they choose and we claim no right to say nay, nor any disposition to say so. It is an

other failure, among the many prophecies of Mr. Pratt, since his notable prophecy of the destruction of New York.

But the church of Christ has obtained a distinctive character, and the differences between us and that people are being known, and we will have very little need of noticing them at any time. The more evil they speak of us, and the more efforts they use for our injury, the more evidence the people will have that we are not of them, and as we know we are in the hands of the Lord and not in theirs, we are disposed hereafter to let them abuse us at their pleasure. The end for which we ever noticed them is now obtained.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

Hampton, Ill. June 18, 1845.

PRESIDENT RIGDON:

Last evening I returned home from attending a conference in Buffalo, Iowa—the seat of Elders Hinkle and Blakeslee's labors since their return from the conference at Pittsburgh. President A. Cowles and myself arrived there on Friday evening, and on Saturday afternoon our meeting commenced. Numbers were in attendance who did not belong to the "Church of Christ."—Some of whom had come from more than forty miles distant, in order to hear and see. Bro. Cowles preached to us a very excellent, plain discourse, and was followed by Elder J. Blakeslee with an exhortation, in demonstration and in power.

On Sunday morning after baptism, brother Cowles again addressed a very large congregation on the doctrine and practice of the kingdom of God. The fire of the Spirit of God seemed to burn in the old man's heart, and he poured it out in a flood of light upon his attentive hearers. Elder Hinkle followed him with some very definite remarks. In the afternoon Elder Blakeslee and myself occupied some over three hours in two discourses, concerning the Book of Mormon, and the work of God that will be accomplished in this generation. We then broke bread, and had a good time of rejoicing with our brethren and sisters. The Spirit of truth operated freely in our hearts, and all the saints seemed to realize our great and high privileges.

Sometime (I think) during the winter of 1830, the fulness of the gospel of the Son of God was introduced in the northern part of the State of Ohio, by the Elders of the church of Christ, where many converts were made to the faith—when the truth, with the love of it, found its way to the heart of a young man who was then studying medicine in the village of Painsville, by the name of Harvey Whitlock. He was soon baptized and set apart to the ministry. He travelled extensively; and his name stands forth conspicuously among the sufferers of the church, during their persecutions in Mo. in 1833. He separated from the Church (I think) in '36: and has for

several years been extensively engaged in his professional business, in the prairie wilds of Iowa. During our April conference I directed the Messenger and Advocate to be sent to him. He read it. And saw in it that we were not only determined to plead for virtue, holiness, and faith unfeigned; but that we were determined to put into practice every holy principle that the Lord required at our hands.

Hearing of our conference in Buffalo, and not living more than fifty miles distant, he was in attendance from its commencement; and hearing and seeing what he did, he came to the full and settled conclusion to unite with us, and throw all his energies into the scale; and again lift his voice in defence of the glorious principles of the kingdom of God. Opportunity being given he arose and in as humble a manner as I ever heard, asked admission into our fellowship by obedience.—It was my privilege to introduce him by baptism and ordination into the "Church of Christ," and ministry of the Son of God. Elder Whitlock is one of the men through whose ministry and tuition, I was first made fully acquainted with the fulness of the gospel of the new and everlasting covenant. Now dear brother, I need not tell you my feelings when I led that man down and immersed him in the great Mississippi; and in accordance with the manifestations of the Spirit of God to us, Elder Blakeslee—the president of "the Twelve" and myself laid our hands upon him and set him apart to that holy ministry, by the authority of which he can again lift up his voice, and publish the principles of salvation to all who may hear, with those thrills of eloquence, that are seldom heard except from gifted minds and voices like his. I pray God to preserve him in faithfulness, and make him an ornament in his kingdom. My father in the flesh, and my father in the gospel, are both in the kingdom; and I have been privileged to introduce them since I last saw you. Again, I say praise the Lord, O! my soul.

Our conference business commenced on Monday morning,—A. Cowles presiding.—From the representation of the branches, it was found that near one hundred had come into the order of the kingdom, as established at our Pittsburgh conference. The most of the day was spent in teaching and preparing the minds of the ministry for their consecration, and for their future labors. I have not the minutes before me, but I believe about fifteen were dedicated to God, after the strongest assurances from them that they—each one, would occupy upon his talents, as the Lord would open the way. They all seemed to realize the necessity of their immediate and speedy action in the cause—in publishing the gospel of peace to the world.

In the evening the ministry met in an upper room, apart from the world, and there received their solemn consecration to God; and with us, entered into a firm covenant "to stand by

each other in all righteousness before God—down until the time of the end." I assure you, my dear brother, we had a good time, and much—very much of the Spirit of God poured out upon us. And while we were thus dedicating the ministry to his service, Elder G. W. Baker, who had received his anointing at Pittsburgh, met with the church in a lower room, in another part of the building, and occasionally during the evening, we could hear the melody of their voices arising to heaven's King—which cheered and encouraged our hearts.

Let me tell you sir, we may expect much from the labors of those strong men of God of the west, in the wide field of the world, which is white already to harvest. O! that God may prosper them and cause them to gather many sheaves, and obtain many stars in their crowns of rejoicing; and come up upon mount Zion when the Lord makes up his jewels for the millennial rest.

President Cowles and myself expecting to leave for the east in a few days, and probably never to return to the west, desired all our brethren and sisters to meet us on the next morning, so as to have a kind of farewell meeting. We met at 8 o'clock. There was a full attendance. I have often heard the saying "the best of the wine is left to the last of the feast," but I never more fully realized its truth than on this occasion. After the meeting was opened, I arose to deliver my valedictory. The power of the Holy Spirit rested down upon me. I walked the floor to and fro, and poured out my feelings, until the sympathies of our natures were tuned to the highest key, and were only allayed by giving vent to a flood of tears. O! that time—that time, sacred in my memory! Those brethren and sisters too, I never, no never shall forget them. Then brother Cowles, and I stood, and the brethren and sisters passed and gave us their hands. O! my soul, lift up thyself and rejoice in God, for the joy and rejoicing in the Lord of that occasion.

We left the brethren baptizing those who became convinced, but how many they thus received, I have not yet heard. As I said at the close of my last letter, the cause of our holy Redeemer, no power on earth can stay it, while we trust not in the arm of flesh, but in the faithfulness of Daniel's God. Let your heart, my dear brother, trust in God, and walk in uprightness before him, and no evil thing that rises up against you, or the cause in which you are engaged, will ever prosper, even so, Amen.

W. E. McLELLIN.

York, July 9th, 1845.

BROTHER RIGDON:—

Dear Sir:—It has been a long while since I joined the "Mormon" Society. The reasons that induced me to become a member were many, a few of which I

will name: 1st I believed them to be a virtuous and honest people. 2d They had the pure doctrine of Christ. 3rd They were governed by revelation, and organised after the pattern of heaven. But alas, how altered is that church, now instead of virtue; burning lust and seduction; instead of pure, the most demoralizing and diabolical doctrine. The church organization is broken up, and the voice of Revelation is heard no more among them; instead of a true, she is an apostate church. She is without a head, and is like the frail bark on the tempestuous ocean without a rudder to guide her into a port of safety. So abject is the condition of the church, so far as divine and spiritual influence is concerned, that I am constrained to give thanks to the sovereign Ruler of the universe, for enabling me to see it, before I was entangled in that most desperate, and destructive sink of vice and immorality. I left the sectarian world, and thank heaven for ridding me of false doctrine; and now I feel to rejoice ten fold more, because, I have been cut off from the liability of falling into corruption and adultery. Being snatched, by the hand of Omnipotence, from the verge of ruin, my feet are planted upon the rock Christ Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Verily, I am compelled to exclaim, how infinite is thy mercy O Lord; and what am I, that thou art mindful of me. Thou hast delivered me from the snares of the adversary, and placed me in the light, and liberty of the children of God, by allowing me to be disfellowshipped from that which was formerly thy church in Philadelphia, where once thy spirit was felt, and thy people rejoiced, and glorified thee; but now no more.

But I must hasten, I wish to relate some of the circumstances under which I was excommunicated. I had been away from home nearly ten months among a people where no church has been established. Last week I returned to Philadelphia, when I arrived, I heard of the abominations, and wickedness of the heads of the church, spoken of by numerous persons, and found that many of the best members in the church were turned out without a hearing, simply because they dared, like men and women, express their opinions about the affairs of the church. Dealing with members in this mode, I considered a flat violation of *all law*, and my suspicions were soon aroused; thought I, there must be something "*rotten in Denmark*." Hence I immediately began to inquire into the matter and soon found another reason why they were cut off; was because they would not sustain the twelve, right or wrong. I pressed my inquiries a little farther, and I soon discovered the ground of opposition to the twelve, and why these excommunicated brethren would not sustain them. It is because they arrogate to themselves authority which does not belong to them, which amounts to a glaring usurpation of power, and teach a doctrine damning in itself, and abhorant to

all the moral sensibilities of our nature. I mean the spiritual wife system; which I can prove they taught in Philadelphia, as well as Nauvoo, by the testimony of respectable and honest men.

To countenance such men for one moment, as leaders in the church of the living God, would be a flat violation of all law, common sense, reason, or any other rule by which enlightened or civilized people are governed. There are heathens and barbarians, who would scorn such a doctrine, as emanating from God. It too is a downright insult to ask any man to support men who teach it. Soon their folly will become so manifest; that they will be overwhelmed with shame and disgrace. Already their administration is not approved by God, and the end of their wickedness is drawing nigh. By this time, I had conversed with a goodly number of persons on the subject, members of the church. I found none that could deny it, hence, my mind was nearly made up to leave the church, but I said nothing about it to any one.

It was impossible for me to fellowship them, and on refusing the sacrament last Sunday, my license was demanded. But not being disposed to comply; without a trial, I was cited by elder Grant, to appear before a great Mormon Sanhedrim, composed of officials, on the following Monday evening. At this opportunity I rejoiced, for he that loves the truth need not be afraid nor ashamed. At the time set I was on the spot and in my place, alone without a friend to speak in my behalf; I asked the privilege of bringing a friend with me, but was denied; in fact one happened in, but was ordered out. Friendless apparently at first, yet before I left, I believe I had some, who were inclined to think as I did, not one half of them voted against me. The Great gun, P. P. Pratt, was present, and the contest was between him and myself. My tongue was loosed, my heart was full of matter, and though they tried to browbeat and gag me, yet my strength and voice increased, and bid defiance to their attempts to silence me. I was doing my duty as an elder in Israel, and before I left, I made them quake under the all powerful lash of truth. When I entered the Hall they flattered themselves that I would not be able to make any defence before his highness P. P. Pratt, but before I left, I succeeded in changing the faces of some, from a contemptible and insignificant sneer to a long hypocritical face. The garb of sanctity was torn off these spiritual wife hypocrites, and their moral deformity laid bare.

Elder Pratt, frequently referred to the book of Covenants to sustain his position, but when I challenged him, or any one present to debate the subject, in reference to authority he dropped the book of Covenants, and said no more about it. From the course pursued by him, and the twelve I am ready to believe, they do not believe either that, or the book of Mormon.

They to me look like a set of ambitious aspirants. Hence I never wish to have any thing more to do with them. They may vomit forth all their filth and spleen, spread abroad all their rancorous vituperation, piebald ribaldry and slander. I am to all intents and purposes with you in following the Lord in his own appointed way. I give God honor and glory for again placing my feet in the way of salvation. May God bless and prosper his people, under the guidance of his Prophet (Sidney Rigdon) is the prayer of your unworthy brother.

N. B. HELVERSON.

Boston, June 24, 1845.

PRESIDENT S. RIGDON:

Dear Brother in Christ, I take my pen to drop a few lines to you at this time. * *

God knows, worlds of wealth is of no value to the gospel of our blessed Saviour; my soul grows larger and expands in the light and glory of God. I have been to the East, preached in the Baptist church Sunday before last; with intense anxiety the people heard me in the forenoon, and desired their Elder to give way for me in the afternoon, to which he consented. I gladly embraced the opportunity, and tried to leave no stone unturned to show them the first principles of the gospel, and the organization of the kingdom of God. Left them in a good state of feeling, all but the Elder, he was very uneasy but treated me gentlemanly; may God bless him and his church to imbrace the gospel. In Boston last Sunday I preached 3 times, and once in Cambridgeport where I now live.

While I was gone to the East, my house was assailed in the night time by a band of ruffians, who insulted my family with hard words and foul speeches, to their great annoyance, until they were compelled to call on their neighbors for assistance and protection. When I returned and found the treatment so gross, without the least provocation my feelings were very much excited, and I made an effort to ferret out the offenders; the neighbors were very much stired up about it; never was known so gross an insult on a respectable family in this region of country. But now came the test of my religion, up comes a man in a carriage for me to go to Boston to lay hands on his aged mother, who was supposed to be dying. I felt I had a wrong spirit, but I took my oil and went. This showed me the importance of being always ready. I told the Lord, like Sampson, if he would return to me, I would submit all persecutors to his charge, and pray for them. The spirit of the living God came with power while I looked on the dying woman; I was astonished, she had not so much as opened her eyes, neither spoken, or even noticed any one for some time; but the spirit bid me pray; I did. It bid me appoint and lay on my hands. The old lady turned over from a doubled up position in the bed, and looked up. Such was the marvel-

ous change, that her children and grand children were greatly amazed, they all burst forth into a flood of tears. Color came in her face like a child, she fell asleep, and I told them the Spirit said if she sleeps she shall do well. The night's rest refreshed her, and the next day she talked with her children all about the goodness of God. I went the second time and her sons and daughters all kneeled down, while I prayed, and God blessed me in a wonderful manner. One of the sons told me it was the first time he ever knelt before God, but hoped it would not be the last. She got up after I left the room; she is a miracle indeed. I think the whole family will embrace the gospel. I spent part of the day with them yesterday.

Sunday we had a heavenly time in our church, the spirit of God rested upon us, the spirit of prophecy was poured out in great effusion, and I can assure you it came with mighty power. The brethren and sisters came together last night at my house, to partake of the Lord's supper; and such prophecy by the spirit I never heard in this vicinity. And to tell you the whole story in a word, I have been filled with perfect love ever since this persecution arose falsely for Christ's sake,

I preached on the town scales in Cambridgeport last Sunday morning at 8 o'clock, to hundreds. The most respectable came up and took me by the hand and expressed the best of feelings toward me. All the respectable part of the place take as much again notice of my unusual persecutions as I do. * * My soul is happy, praise the Lord, peace on earth, and good will to man.

Now Sir, the desire of the honest in this region of country is, that you should come here and spend some time. The citizens of Peterboro, are very anxious for you to come and make them a visit, and lay before them the principles of life. I rejoice to hear the prospect of the saints abroad. I wish you health and happiness and that the blessings of God may ever be with you.

From your unworthy brother.

Wm. HUTCHINGS.

West Buffalo, Scott co. I. T. June 21, 1845.

DEAR BROTHER E. ROBINSON:—

This will inform you, that I am at this place, (West Buffalo Scott co. I. T.) with my wife and family, in as comfortable circumstances as could be expected, all things considered. And now I will give you a short history of the dealings of the good Lord with me since I left your city, which was on the 14th April, 1845, and in company with as good men as this age could produce. I made my way toward home as fast as steam (applied to the boat I traveled on) could carry me, with but one little delay; and I arrived at Hampton Rock Island co. Ill. the 27th, found my family all well, and as a matter of course glad to see me. We preach-

ed several times on our way home, and we think left good impressions on the hearts of many who sailed with us.

I tarried at home three days and then went to Buffalo to join elder G. M. Hinkle in the Mission appointed me by the first presidency, in Iowa and Illinois. We have labored day and night diligently unto the present time, the Lord working with us, and confirming the word with signs following; and we have had to our assistance some of the time, *that energetic and faithful laborer* in the cause of truth, elder W. E. McLellan, and that worthy and well beloved brother President A. Cowles.— They attended our conference in this place, the present week. The work is fairly introduced in this region on both sides of the Mississippi river. We have baptized in all, 89 persons, and many more are believing, and I expect to immerse some more on tomorrow, at this place. Thus the Kingdom of heaven is beginning to roll onward in its course, in fulfillment of some prophecies made at the time of its organization, in the city of Pittsburgh last April.

Dear Brother suffice it to say, that all things pertaining to the Kingdom of heaven in the West, as far as I have any knowledge, are going on about right. The Lord is with us in very deed, and so are some of the servants of the prince of darkness, each endeavoring to establish his claim to the purchased possession. But the Kingdom of our God is gaining ground, and will if all his subjects are faithful, triumph gloriously. I had well nigh said, pray for us, but I know if you have the spirit of the Lord, as I verily believe you have, you cannot forget it any more, than you could forget to settle up your accounts with your own heart, every morning and evening. You will see by the minutes of our conference published in the 12th No. of the Ensign, what we have been doing, more fully than I could write on this sheet.

Indeed Sir from the time of the organization at Pittsburgh up to the present time, my mind has been feasting on the peaceable things of the kingdom, while the word of God is like a fire in my heart and bones, shut up. I feel that I am now in my right element. I have enjoyed much of the spirit of God in days gone by while preaching the gospel, but I feel as though I had now just began to live. I set out anew with our organization of the kingdom of God, and my determination is, by the grace of God, to be faithful "to the time of the end." The Lord bless you all.

Yours in hope of the rest of God.

JAMES BLAKESLEE.

Wellsville, O. July 10, '45.

DEAR BROTHER:—

Since I left you on a short tour of preaching, the Lord has blessed me very much with his Spirit, which caused me

to speak 'the word' with much power in the hearing of the people.

On Sunday night last, as I was about to lie down to rest, I kneeled before my heavenly Father, and asked him in the name of Jesus Christ to open the way before his servants, that they might go forth and preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the people; that they might hear, and understand, believe, and repent of their sins, and obey the commandments of God: that they might partake of his spirit to enlighten their minds, in order that they might know "the signs of the times"—which already betoken the near approach of the Son of God. To this end was my strong desire, and my supplications before the Lord, and then I laid me down and rested during the night, not thinking of going myself to any place soon. But when I arose in the morning, it was manifested to me to go to the little town of Knoxville in Ohio, where I have an uncle living, and preach the gospel of the kingdom, and bear my testimony to them.

So with this light I conferred not with flesh and blood," but left my home last Monday with faith in my heavenly Father that he would open the way before me. The same day in the evening I reached Knoxville. The news soon spread that a strange preacher had come to town. I conversed freely, and the next day a young man who lived at the place where I stopped said he would like to hear me preach. I told him I would preach if a house could be found for the meeting. He soon obtained the school house. An appointment was circulated for evening. The school house was filled and some stood outside. I preached to them, and the Lord poured out his Spirit upon me mightily, which indeed preached through me "the wonderful works of God." The congregation listened very attentively to what I spake to them in the name of the Lord. Some said they believed what I said, and all treated me very kindly—and may God grant that they may receive the truth, and the love of it in their hearts, and be saved by faith and obedience in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus.

On the 9th I left for Wellsville believing that God would open a door that I might preach the things which were in my heart to the inhabitants of that village also. I arrived there about 10 o'clock A. M. After I had rested about one hour, I commenced going through the town and trying to get a house to speak in, but my labour seemed to be all in vain. I came there to preach to the people, and I was determined that I would not be frustrated. So when I found that I could not get a house (although there were plenty,) I told those who refused that I could preach on the corner of the street. But I was informed that I might preach in the grove at the upper end of town. I then went from house to house and told the people that I would preach in the evening, and by doing so a goodly number as-

sembled at the time appointed. When I arose before that people to lay before them the gospel of the Kingdom of God, this I can say in truth, that no man living can, even imagine my feelings, except he has been called with the same holy calling, and feels the weight of the same holy ministry. I had no fear, for the Lord's spirit had cast that all out; and I was filled with power to declare truths to that people, and bear to them a testimony which they never can forget. I had spoken to them about an hour on the principles of the gospel, when the spirit of God said to me "to prophesy." The future was then in a degree opened up before me, and I declared to them many things which made them look very earnestly at me, I assure you: and I felt some astonished myself.

When I closed I could say with the Psalmist, "Praise the Lord O! my soul." For the Lord did bless me wonderfully while I stood before that people. My prayer to God is that his kingdom may roll on with power, for the salvation of all the honest in heart; until it shall bring in the rest of God: for which all the ancient saints and prophets looked with so much anxiety.

May the Lord bless you my brethren in the truth.

ROBERT KINCAID.

N. B. Brother Croxall will preach in this place next Sunday.

R. K.

Philadelphia, July 9th, 1845.

BROTHER E. ROBINSON—Having a few leisure moments I occupy them in writing to you.

* * Our meetings last Sunday were well attended. The official members here seem to be awakened to a sense of their duty, and have commenced preaching in other places besides our usual one. * * There has been quite a flare up among the twelveites here. Elder Helverson a man of more than ordinary ability, who had been absent for some time returned on a visit among his relatives. Hearing many reports he felt to investigate, consequently came to our meeting on Sunday morning. This was enough. * * He was cited to trial. The great apostle "I Parley P Pratt," was sent for or came accidentally. The Elder was put on trial. The principal charge was slander founded upon this principle—If the twelve had done wrong he had no business to accuse them of it, or to tell it to any one else. He undertook to plead his own cause by referring to the book of Covenants. But they would arise and say he was out of order. The Elder then requested time to investigate and consider upon the claims of the twelve. Whereupon "I Parley" under whose special jurisdiction Elder H. lived "moved he be cut off from the Church" that he might have time to investigate. This is a tacit acknowledgement of what their actions have indicated for some time past. That is, that no man shall have the right to investigate their

authority while he is a member of their Church. O what blindness of heart and of mind—and to what an extent cannot human beings be duped. Our brethren here are very anxious that bro. McLellan should come to this city immediately. Indeed I am satisfied that there is no place in the United States where he could do more good. Dear brother, urge him to come on right away if possible.

B. WINCHESTER.

Pittsburgh, July 7, 1845.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

At the hearty request of my good friend F—I stopped at the Iron city, so Philadelphia, ere I see it, will be two or three days older, and I that wane of time, nearer the tomb. Sunday I went in company with my friend to the meeting of a people known as the Church of Christ; the place is comfortably fitted up, and will hold a congregation from 3 to 5 hundred, and upon this occasion it was well filled; you know I stand free from all Sects, Creeds and Societies, and thus I speak and write impartially, wherever I find sincerity in a people seeking after that holiest and brightest gem, divine truth—and a thought like this entered my mind; out of the vast myriads that have passed and are now on the stage of action, can this little flock, congregated in this up stairs room, be now the chosen people of God, who are to assist in bringing about the mighty results and to be the principal laborers in the last hour of the six thousand years? who dare say to the contrary? Not I.

The excellent discourse by Elder McLellan, free from severe reflections upon the benighted state of the world. No spleen—no coarse epithets, to maintain a point in doctrine, lavished upon the sectarian world—but charitable language and feeling keeping company with the speaker and congregation—in fine, better order, unaffected piety, I have not seen since I first heard the sound of the everlasting gospel. That's right, give us example—"by their fruits shall ye know them" says our divine Master. The meeting over, I was forced to the conclusion if truth is not here, where is it to be found? Consider well. Meditate on the text, "Lord who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" You, whispered the still small voice, if you practice the lesson taught this morning by the preacher.

T. A. L.

MESSANGER & ADVOCATE, OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,

Is printed about the first and fifteenth of every month, by

E. ROBINSON,

(Book, Job and Xylographic Printer,) No. 197
Liberty st. Head of Wood, Pittsburgh Pa.

TERMS: \$1 per annum payable in advance